



Update: Lower Basin Waste Consolidation Areas

Many thanks to everyone who gave input on the criteria for siting new Waste Consolidation Areas in the Lower CDA River Basin! We know that communities are impacted by the siting of WCAs, and hearing from the people who could be impacted is important. With this in mind, we ran an extended public input period (July 27 – September 30, 2020) to hear from the community and inform our decision making. View public input and EPA’s responses:

- [Lower Basin Waste Consolidation Areas Siting Criteria: EPA Responsiveness Summary \(PDF\)](#)
(10 pages 264.16 KB)

Construction of any Waste Consolidation Area is still a few years away. Before this happens, we need to evaluate the potential effectiveness of various Lower Basin cleanup technologies. At this time, we are gathering information in the Dudley Reach area, near Rose Lake, to determine which pilot project or projects to set in motion. Depending on which project is selected, it may generate some waste material that will need to be consolidated and placed in a safe area away from people. Once we select a pilot project, we will know how much waste, if any, it will generate, and what size any WCA would need to be. At that point we will look at properties where we can locate the WCA. The pilot project will likely be constructed in 2024 or 2025. If the pilot project generates waste, a WCA would need to be constructed and prepared the year before to be ready to accept waste.

CONTACT: **Patrick Hickey**, EPA • hickey.patrick@epa.gov • 206-553-6295.



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Blood Lead Screening Update



To prevent the spread of COVID-19, Panhandle Health District's annual blood lead testing did not take place in 2020. PHD is currently evaluating whether to hold the blood lead testing event this year. Stay tuned for more information. Individual blood lead screenings are always free with an appointment. Any individual living, working, or recreating within the Bunker Hill Superfund Site is eligible. Lead exposure can cause severe health problems, especially for young children and pregnant women. For more information, call PHD at 208-783-0707.

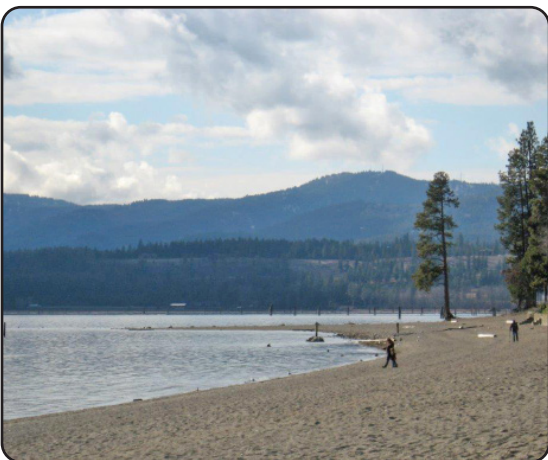
Protect Your Family's Health: Get Your Property Tested

Property cleanups reduce exposure to lead and other metals, protecting people's health – especially children. During a property remediation, generally the top 6-12 inches of contaminated soil is removed and replaced with clean material or a barrier such as grass. More than 7,000 properties have been cleaned up to date in the Box and Basin. These include residential and commercial properties, rights-of-way, and private drinking water sources. Properties remaining to be sampled and/or cleaned up are those whose owners have refused access, or who have not responded to contact attempts by the CDA Work Trust and IDEQ. Currently, 216 eligible properties in the Upper and Lower Basin likely require sampling. Based on previous sampling, 40 properties will likely require cleanup. In the Box, nine properties remain to be cleaned up. If you believe your property may be eligible and you'd like to have it sampled for mining-related metals, please see contact below.



CONTACT: IDEQ, 208-783-5781, or **Kyle Richards**, Coeur d'Alene Work Trust, 208-783-0222.

National Academies of Sciences Launches Study: 'The Future of Water Quality in Coeur d'Alene Lake'



Last year, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality asked the National Academies of Sciences to analyze available data on Coeur d'Alene Lake water quality and make recommendations to address identified concerns. The NAS agreed to undertake the study and has assembled a 14-member committee. The committee hosted its first public meeting in February. EPA participated in that kick-off meeting and will continue to provide information to the committee at their request. The State of Idaho and Kootenai County are the primary financial sponsors of the \$776,000 NAS study. EPA contributed \$20,000 in non-Superfund related funds. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is also supporting the study with technical expertise. EPA's Superfund and water programs both stand ready to answer questions or provide technical assistance or data based

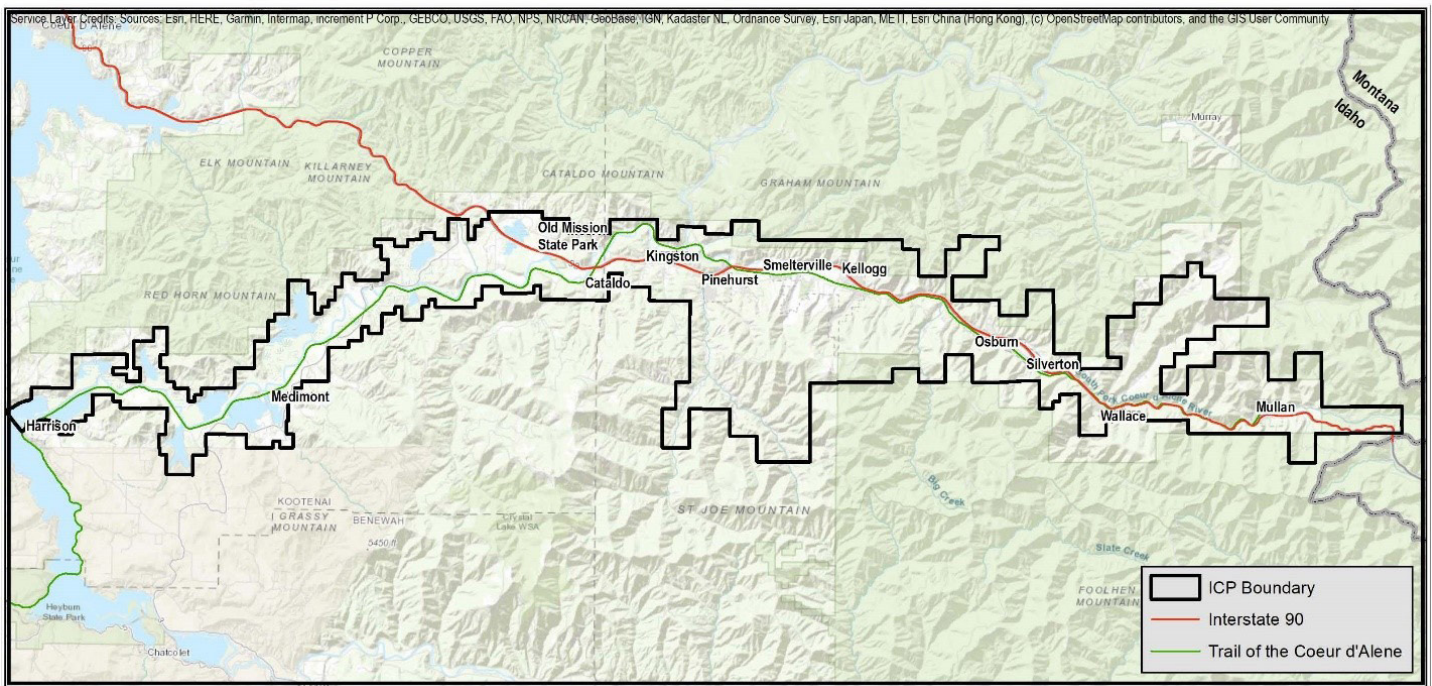
on 30 years of research and cleanup experience in the Basin and Coeur d'Alene Lake's tributaries. EPA strongly supports this effort to consider and evaluate all non-point sources that contribute to impact lake water quality. We look forward to the NAS recommendations as we all work for a cleaner, safer lake.

For more Information, visit:

<https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/the-future-of-water-quality-in-coeur-dalene-lake>

What is the Institutional Controls Program?

The Panhandle Health District manages and enforces the Institutional Controls Program. The ICP was created to ensure barriers (such as clean soil or gravel) covering metals-contaminated soil continue to protect residents' health. The ICP makes it possible for residents to get up to a cubic yard of clean soil or gravel each year, to keep their barriers in good shape. If a resident is doing a small excavation project, the ICP will provide containers or facilitate soil pickup and disposal. PHD plans to continue delivering soil. However, deliveries depend on demand, resources, and staff availability. Be aware that permits are needed for many types of indoor and outdoor construction activities. Permits and consultations are free. Before you dig on your property or start an interior project, make sure you are following the ICP rules. See the ICP boundaries map below. If you have questions or need more information, contact PHD at 208-783-0707.



It's Time for Institutional Controls Program Contractors License Renewals

Panhandle Health District wants to remind contractors working within the Bunker Hill Superfund Site Administrative Boundary (see map above), that permits are required before work begins on any project that disturbs dirt. The rules requiring ICP permits are set forth under **IDAPA 41.01.01.511**. These rules protect public health by ensuring that barriers are maintained, and releases of contaminants are prevented, within the ICP administrative area.

ICP contractor licenses require renewal annually. If you and/or your employees have attended the class within the last 3 years, the license can be renewed by taking the exam online.

Go to www.panhandlehealthdistrict.org/institutional-controls-program.

For first time license applicants: Please call 208-783-0707 to reserve a spot in class.

Class times (excluding holidays): Monday: 8:00 a.m.; Thursday: 1:00 p.m. If you have several employees who need the class or are unable to attend the pre-scheduled class, feel free to contact PHD and they will do their best to make other arrangements. There are no fees for ICP permits, licensing, or classes.

Five-Year Review Schedule: CDA Basin Cleanup

You may be aware that EPA is extending completion of its fifth Five-Year Review of the Bunker Hill Superfund Site, also called the “Coeur d’Alene Basin Cleanup.” We expect to complete the Five-Year Review and release the final Five-Year Review Report in early- to mid-summer 2021. The review checks to make sure the cleanup is protecting people’s health and the environment. EPA reviews Superfund cleanups every five years after a cleanup decision is issued, even when active cleanup is ongoing. In January 2020, we invited you to share information about the site that could help with this review. In response to several requests, we extended our public input period through April 30, 2020. Thank you to everyone who provided input. EPA received over 400 emails and letters. Most of these expressed concern about Lake Coeur d’Alene and its water quality, and requested EPA conduct a Remedial Investigation and select a remedy for the lake. As a remedy has not yet been selected for Lake Coeur d’Alene, an evaluation of its performance will not be included in the Five-Year Review report. However, we will include a discussion of lake activities and studies that have been conducted since the 2015 Five-Year Review in the report’s appendices.

CONTACT: **Tamara Langton**, EPA • langton.tamara@epa.gov • 206-553-2709 (desk) • 206-473-7663 (mobile).



Workers at Tamarack Mine No. 7, in the Upper CDA River Basin.

Basin Cleanup Employs Many Local Workers

Cleanup activities in the Basin employ a large number of local workers. For the 2020 field season, the Army Corps of Engineers, IDEQ, and PHD employed over 43 staff on the cleanup project. The Corps’ contractor is Wood, and IDEQ’s contractors are Alta, North Wind, and McGillivray. In addition, the CDA Work Trust employed a total of 100 seasonal construction workers. 95 percent of these seasonal workers are from the local area. Crews perform such work as mine waste excavation and hauling, clean backfill placement, hydro-seeding, and dust abatement. The Trust also employed a total of 127 workers and sub-contractors at various times throughout 2020, to develop designs and plan and implement investigations and cleanup.

Theater Bridge Cleanup Coming this Spring

If you head north on Airport Road in Smelterville, just before crossing over the South Fork CDA River, you’ll find a parking area owned by the Idaho Transportation Department. It has become popular with swimmers and campers during the summer months. With the increased recreational use, Panhandle Health District’s Institutional Controls Program took the initiative to sample the areas being used by recreationalists and found elevated levels of metals across the site. IDEQ’s contractor will remove about 2,300 cubic yards of contaminated material. It will be hauled to Page Repository for final disposal. The area will be capped with clean material, and ITD will replace fencing that is in disrepair. The work at the Theater Bridge Recreation site will take place in this spring, as soon as weather allows.

CONTACT: **Andy Helkey**, IDEQ • andy.helkey@deq.idaho.gov • 208-783-5781.



Update: Gray's Meadow Agriculture to Wetland Conversion Project



We're getting ready for another productive field season at the Gray's Meadow cleanup and restoration project in the Lower CDA River Basin. The project is in the 60 percent design phase. The wetlands are connected to Black Lake and the Coeur d'Alene River. We're designing the project to manage waters coming into and going out of the wetland. This winter/spring we will be upgrading and relocating the pump discharge for the Cave Lake (east) field, from Black Lake to the CDA River. The Lamb Peak (west) field realignment and discharge design will take place in late summer/fall and will require pumping into the tie channel and Black Lake one last time during this winter/spring. This will

allow us to manage water levels in the short term to accommodate construction activities and complete the remediation and restoration. Over the long term, managing water levels helps protect water quality in adjacent waters, and protects the wetland and feeding habitat for migratory water birds in the Lower Basin. About 18,000 acres have lead concentrations above levels safe for wildlife. We'll start upgrading the Cave Lake pump discharge this March, when the CDA River water level is low, minimizing impacts to water quality. Pumping into Black Lake will be complete by the third week in May. Neighbors in the Black Lake community may notice signs and activity along the trail, and winter recreational trail users may be diverted around the construction area for a few days. When completed, the project will:

- Reduce lead contamination in the soil to safe levels for water birds.
- Convert 700 acres of agricultural lands to wetland and riparian habitat with native vegetation and cleaner water.
- Create islands that provide habitat and nesting sites.
- Reduce pumping by passively maintaining water levels helpful to the wetland plants and animals.

CONTACT: **Kim Prestbo**, EPA • prestbo.kim@epa.gov • 206-553-0239.

Upper Basin Projects: Forecast

EPA is planning this season's Upper Basin design investigations and cleanup projects. Over the years, we've been removing metals-contaminated materials from old mine and mill sites. This source control work prevents the contaminants from washing downstream, improving water quality and reducing exposures for people and wildlife. In 2021, under EPA direction, the CDA Work Trust will start investigations at seven new projects:

- In **Canyon Creek**: Gem Complex, Standard Mammoth Reach, Ajax No. 3, Canyon Creek Garbage Dump, Marsh Mine, and Oneill Gulch Unnamed Rock Dump
- In **Ninemile Creek**: Ninemile Creek Riparian Area



*The Gem Millsite Complex
in Canyon Creek Basin.*

These cleanup studies will help us understand the nature and extent of contamination at these locations, so we can design cleanups that protect people's health and the environment. A number of other Upper Basin cleanup investigations that began in past seasons will continue this year. Last year, we completed a large, multi-year cleanup at the Interstate Millsite in East Fork Ninemile Canyon.

CONTACTS: **Bonnie Arthur**, EPA • arthur.bonnie@epa.gov • 206-553-4072.

Tamara Langton, EPA • langton.tamara@epa.gov • 206-553-2709.

Jennifer Crawford, EPA • crawford.jennifer@epa.gov • 206-553-6261.

Cleanup Design Begins at Douglas Site

Last summer, crews finished collecting data at the old Douglas Mine and Mill. The site is along the East Fork of Pine Creek, south of Pinehurst. This year, the CDA Trust, under EPA's direction, is using this data to prepare a cleanup design that will reduce contaminant exposures for people and wildlife. The design process will continue through the year. Construction is slated for 2022. Most recently, visitors have used the Douglas site for motorcycle and ATV riding, camping, and target shooting. These activities pose health risks, because metals in the dust and soil can be breathed in or swallowed. Metals-contaminated materials along the creek can dissolve, and harm water quality.

CONTACT: **Patrick Hickey**, EPA • hickey.patrick@epa.gov

• 206-553-6295.



Taking water samples from a well installed at the Douglas site.

Comings and Goings

Congratulations, Andy Helkey!



EPA's CDA Basin Cleanup team would like to congratulate Andy Helkey! Last year, Andy started a new position as Remediation Manager at the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in Kellogg. For seven years, Andy served as the Program Manager for the Institutional Controls Program at Panhandle Health District. At IDEQ, Andy's responsibilities include directing the Kellogg Office, coordinating with EPA and PHD on remediation tasks, and overseeing Page Repository operations. Andy graduated from the University of Idaho and has a degree in Environmental Science. He is a longtime resident of the Silver Valley. In his free time, Andy enjoys hiking and being outdoors. He said, "I am enjoying my new leadership role at IDEQ. I look forward to continuing to engage with the great project team and my local community on this important cleanup." You can reach Andy at andy.helkey@deq.idaho.gov or 208-783-5781.

Welcome Mary Rehnborg!



EPA's CDA Basin Cleanup team is happy to welcome Panhandle Health District's Mary Rehnborg into her new role. In November 2020, Mary took over the position of Program Manager for the Institutional Controls Program. She will oversee PHD's blood lead screening and property remediation programs, and will manage daily operations of the ICP, among other duties. Mary has worked as an ICP inspector at PHD for 9 years. She studied Biology and Chemistry at Saint Martin's University and is in her senior year at the University of Idaho, where she is earning her BS in Environmental Science. Mary has lived in the Silver Valley for 15 years with her husband and two children. She is an avid outdoor enthusiast and spends much of her free time hiking, snowshoeing, or skiing the mountains of North Idaho. She said, "I am honored to be in the position of helping protect public health in my own community of the Silver Valley. I look forward to working with the project team, and to continue engaging with the community." Mary can be reached at mrehnborg@phd1.idaho.gov or 208-783-0707.

Lead Health Education: Materials Online

This year, many of Panhandle Health District's outreach efforts are on pause or altered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, PHD is putting in-person lead health education outreach efforts to local schools on hold, and focusing more on online and outdoor activities. Last year, several events were cancelled, including the North Idaho Fair and Shoshone Medical Center Kids Health Fair. We're waiting to hear whether these events will be scheduled this year. Please stay tuned for more information. In the meantime, visit www.deq.idaho.gov/playclean and www.panhandlehealthdistrict.org/institutional-controls-program to find helpful information. We look forward to being out in the community again, to distribute materials and answer your questions! Please call PHD at 208-783-0707 for more information — or visit www.deq.idaho.gov/contact-us/outreach-request.



Documents

North Idaho College Library

Molstead Library
1000 Garden Avenue – Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-769-3355

Wallace Public Library

415 River Street – Wallace, ID 83873
208-752-4571

Spokane Public Library

906 West Main Avenue – Spokane, WA 99201
509-444-5336

EPA Field Office

1910 Northwest Boulevard, Suite 210
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
208-664-4588

EPA Seattle Office

Superfund Record Center
1200 Sixth Avenue – Seattle, WA 98101
206-553-4494 or 800-424-4372

St. Maries Library

822 W. College Avenue – St. Maries, ID 83861
208-245-3732

Kellogg Public Library

16 West Market Avenue – Kellogg, ID 83837
208-786-7231

Opportunities to Get Involved

Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (BEIPC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Terry Harwood

208-783-2528 • www.basincommission.com

Citizens Coordinating Council (CCC)

CHAIR: Jerry Boyd

509-220-1453 • www.basincommission.com/cc

The Basin Bulletin is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency three times a year. The Basin Bulletin offers updates on the Superfund cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. For mailing list changes, to send comments on this newsletter, contact the editors, or submit articles for consideration, contact Debra Sherbina as noted. Mention of trade names, products, or services does not convey, and should not be interpreted as conveying, official EPA approval, endorsement, or recommendation.

Alternative formats are available

For reasonable accommodation, please call

☎ Debra Sherbina • 206-553-0247.

📠 TTY users, please call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.



EPA Community Involvement Contact

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BASIN BULLETIN

Updates on the Coeur d'Alene Basin Cleanup

March 2021

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**Learn More About the
Coeur d'Alene Basin Cleanup
on the Web**

www.epa.gov/superfund/bunker-hill

